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*A seasonable Admonition to the Church of
England.*

A

S E R M O N

PREACHED BEFORE THE

U N I V E R S I T Y

O F

O X F O R D,

At St. MARY's,

On the *Twenty Ninth* of *May*, 1751.

*And what I say unto you, I say unto all, WATCH.
Mark XIII. 37.*

WATCH ye, stand fast in the FAITH. 1 Cor. XVI. 13.

*Behold, I come quickly: HOLD that FAST, which THOU
HAST, that no Man TAKE thy CROWN. Our Lord
to the Church in Philadelphia. Rev. III. 11.*

O X F O R D,

Printed at the THEATRE, for SACKVILLE PARKER, and E. WITHERS at
the *Seven-Stars*, near *Temple-Bar*. MDCCLV. Price *Six-pence*.

AC911.1755.W37

Imprimatur,

GEO. HUDDSFORD,

Vice-Can. O x o n.

Mar. 12. 1755.

P R E F A C E.

THE following Discourse, not having been published at the Time it was preached, was not afterwards intended for the Press; but the Reasons, which then induced me to choose the Subject, here considered, for the Day's Meditation, and to consider it in the Manner I have done, are now become much stronger Motives to the Publication of my Sentiments; Inattention and Indifference to the Things of God increasing more and more throughout the Land, and Infidelity thence taking Occasion daily to insinuate its mortal Venom into the very Vitals of Christianity! And shall the Love of Christ, in the Hearts of his Ministers, be less active to save his People, than the Malice of Satan, in the Hearts of his Enemies, so evidently is to destroy them? God forbid! No—it is our Duty to speak, even though we are not heard; to proclaim the glad Tidings of Peace, though Men will remain at Enmity with God; to call off their

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groveling Attention from earthly to spiritual Pursuits, though they should still prefer Earth to Heaven, transitory Vanities to eternal Glory; to shew them the Way, and the Truth, and the Life, even the Lord Jesus Christ, who, and who only, is all these¹, though they should perversely wander on still in the Wilderness of their own Way, through all the Mazes of Error, into an endless Death. And in a Time of spiritual Famine and Distress, we should do this with the more Assiduity; it is a constant Labor of Love, but eminently so at such a Season; he that sees another's Danger, and warns him not of it, cannot possibly love him. Now all, that is here proposed flows from this Principle entirely, from the Love of Christ, and the Love of Men, for his Sake. If I loved not him, I should not be zealous for his Glory — I should hold my Peace; if I loved not Man, I should not be zealous for his Salvation — I could then see him perish with Indifference. Wherefore, while it is to Day, let me use the Word of Exhortation. We must be sensible surely, upon Reflection, that the Generality of Men are very far from God; chiefly, if not wholly, intent upon the Pleasures and Inte-

¹ John XIV. 6.

rests of this *World*; regardless of the Things beyond it, which are only seen with the Eye of Faith; almost entirely unacquainted with the Evidence of God's Word; and having little or no Experience of the Effects of his Religion. Hence it is, that the Things, designed for their Knowledge, are so dark and difficult to be understood; they want that spiritual Discernment, without which, the Apostle tells them, they cannot see them¹. Hence the great Truths of our most holy Faith — 1. the Personality in the Godhead, 2. the Grace superadded to the blessed Sacraments, 3. the spiritual Sense of the Bible, 4. Justification in Christ alone, by Faith only, without any Works that we can do towards it, &c. Hence likewise all the divine Institutions thereof — Those 1. of holy Matrimony, 2. of Episcopacy, 3. of an Order of Persons separated, to officiate, under their Authority, in holy Things, 4. of Ecclesiastical Censures and wholesome Discipline, to restrain destructive Heresies, carnal Schisms, and Ungodliness, (for take away the Government and Discipline of a Church, and her Doctrines and Devotion will soon follow after)

— *these, I say, and in a Word, all divine Things whatever, are generally esteemed Subjects of doubtful Disputation, if not totally disbelieved: though in the Instances abovementioned, it is demonstrable from holy Scripture (the only Guide in spiritual Matters, which are not Objects of Sense) that* 1. *There are Three, that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are One¹; that, thus saith the Lord, cursed (is) the Man, that trusteth in Man²; (but we trust in Christ³) and that none (no Man) can by any Means redeem (his) Brother, or give to God a Ransom for him⁴; (but we are redeemed by Christ⁵, and he is our Ransom⁶.) Wherefore our Lord Christ must be very God, as well as very Man, else were our Religion a self Contradiction, and our Worship Idolatry; that a spiritual Creation is as much a Work of Almighty Power, as a natural one, and the Holy Spirit, in the Work of our Sanctification, creates a clean Heart, and renews a right Spirit within us⁷. That* 2. *except a Man be born of*

1 1 John V. 7. 2 Jer. XVII. 5. 3 Matth. XII. 21. Ephes. I. 12. 13. 4 Ps. XLIX. 7. 5 Coloss. I. 14. Heb. IX. 12. Rev. V. 9. 6 Job. XXXIII. 24. Hof. XIII. 14. Matth. XX. 28. 1 Tim. II. 6. 7 Ps. LI. 10, 11. CIV. 30. Tit. III. 5.

Water AND THE SPIRIT, he cannot enter into the *Kingdom of God*¹; and except ye eat the *Flesh* of the *Son of Man*, and *drink* his *Blood*, ye have *no Life* in you — who so eateth my *Flesh* and drinketh my *Blood*, hath eternal *Life* — he that eateth of *this Bread* shall live *for ever*². The external *Cleansing* of the *Laver* cannot wash away *Sin*; nor the *perishable Substance* of the *Bread* and *Wine* keep the *Body* from *Decay*, much less preserve *That* and the *Soul* unto *Everlasting Life*: only the eternal *Spirit*, accompanying the outward *Rite* with *almighty Power*, can, by moving upon the *Face* of the *Waters*, in this new or *spiritual* *Creation*, and applying the *Body* and *Blood* of *Christ* to the *Souls* of *Believers*, purge the *Conscience* from *dead Works* to serve the *living God*³, or support that *Life* in *Man* which is not sustained by *Bread*⁴. Nay, that what we call *Sacraments* must be visible *Signs* of invisible *Things*, or they must cease to be *Sacraments*, for “a *Sacrament* is an “outward or visible *Sign* of an inward and “spiritual *Grace*” — yea, and “a *Means*” too

¹ John III. 5.
Matth. IV. 4.

² John VI. 53, 54, 58.

³ Heb. IX. 14.

⁴ Deut. VIII. 3.

“whereby

“whereby’ we receive *the same*.” That 3. The Holy Scriptures, *unless* spiritually interpreted, are like the mere Elements in the Sacraments, a dead and killing Letter¹, as unable to give Life to the devout Reader, as those Elements are to do the same to the faithful Receiver. And that 4. the Apostle saith — Knowing that a Man is not justified by the Works of the Law, but by the Faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the Faith of Christ, and not by the Works of the Law — for by the Works of the Law shall no Flesh be justified². For That would make us, in Part, our own Saviours and Justifiers, whereas Christ hath suffered in our Stead, and done and merited for us Sinners, what we could not do or merit for ourselves; wherefore high Reason is there, that it should be, as the divine Scriptures affirm, not of him that willet, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth Mercy³. After we are justified, we may, and ought to work indeed under sanctifying Grace; but yet, no Work that proceedeth of Grace lays claim to any Merit of its own, any Reward

1 2 Cor. III. 6. 2 Gal. II. 16. 3 Rom. IX. 16.

as of Debt, but humbly seeks Acceptance through his Merits, by whose divine Power it was wrought. That with Regard to the other Point, the divine Institutions above spoken of — 1. The Lord God brought the first Woman, in Paradise, unto the Man in Person¹, and still joins Man and Wife by divinely delegated Power, which is therefore as much his Act and Deed, as if he did it in Person². That 2. the divinely-inspired Apostles, who were themselves appointed by Christ, appointed Bishops for their Successors; and that no Man taketh the Honour of this Office, either of the high Priesthood, or Episcopacy (which is the same) — no not the Man Christ himself, without being called of God³ — i. e. appointed by the Power, and in the Method of his divine Institution, who accordingly called (or so appointed) the First-born under the Patriarchal State, the Family of Aaron under the Law; and the Apostles, and their duly consecrated Successors under the Gospel: Korah, Dathan and Abiram, FOR taking it to themselves, went down alive into the Pit⁴. That 3. with

¹ Gen. II. 22. ² Matth. XIX. 6. ³ Heb. V. 4, 5. ⁴ Numb. XVI. 3, 5, 32, 33, 40.

Regard to the Priesthood, Moses, having frequently recorded God's Appointment of the First-born, to officiate in the then-united Character of the High Priesthood, and the Priesthood, relates the Re-institution of these holy Offices, when seperated, in the most circumstantial Manner possible — that having first; by divine Direction, consecrated Aaron himself, he then immediately, by the same divine Commission, consecrated the Sons of Aaron, the Priests i. e. as the original Words for consecrated signifie, he perfected or fully-impowered them all (therefore they had no Power of themselves) to minister in holy Things, in the Sight, i. e. under the Episcopacy, Inspection, or Authority of Aaron their Father¹. And that St. Paul expressly declares, for our Purpose, that he left one of the Bishops, he had appointed, in Crete, to ordain Elders or Presbyters (i. e. Priests) in every City, even, says the Apostle, as I had appointed thee². Heaping up to themselves Teachers, is a Mark set by the same Apostle upon such as will not endure sound Doctrine, but follow after their own Lusts — having itching Ears³; and is one

¹ Exod. XXIX. Levit. VIII. Numb. III. 3, 4. ² Tit. I. 5. ³ 2 Tim. IV. 3.

of the highest Crimes a Man can be guilty of against the Spirit of Unity. And 4. lastly, with Regard to Discipline, that our Lord saith — whoever shall neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen Man and a Publican (i.e. cut off by Excommunication from all the Privileges of the Gospel) adding very remarkably, in the Words immediately following, his own divine Ratification of all duly-inflicted Acts of Discipline — Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven¹. To which divinely-instituted Authority the Apostle doubtless refers in his Direction both to Timothy and Titus — Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear²; these Things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all Authority — let no Man despise thee³. Though all these Things, and others that might be mentioned (as might be more fully shewn) are, I say, so clear beyond all Contradiction — yet, how few, called Christians, are at all acquainted with them; how many (I trust, in Ignorance) dispute, or perhaps entire-

¹ Matth. XVIII. 17, 18. ² 1 Tim. V. 20. ³ Tit. II. 15.

ly disbelieve them? And how openly are they, with the Pen and Tongue, yea, and with what Impunity, blasphemed? And yet, they are fundamental Articles of the Christian Religion. Though we hear so little of them, wherever we go, and with whomsoever we converse; they are the Things we were born to know; they are the only Things, the Knowledge of which will profit us; the only Knowledge that we shall carry beyond the Grave; the only Wisdom that leads to Heaven. Thus far gone out of the Way, and dead to the spiritual Things of the City that is above, Men rest satisfied with earthly Things, and bare external Observances; as if Faith which worketh by Love¹, and Hope, the Anchor of the Soul², as if spiritual Persons, Things, and Operations were mere Matters of Opinion, no Way essential to Salvation; as if to follow Israel in her Unbelief, was the Path to that Rest, which she fell short of because of Unbelief³, or taking hold of the Law (which Men cannot perform) without the End thereof (which is and ever was CHRIST⁴) was the Way now

¹ Gal. V. 6. ² Heb. VI. 19. ³ Heb. III. 19. ⁴ Rom. X. 4. Heb. XIII. 8.

to the Privileges of the Gospel. And yet, we profess, as all true Christians must profess, yea, and what is more, must experience, that we are risen with Christ¹ (risen from the Death of Sin to the new Life of Righteousness in Him²) and that, in Consequence of that our spiritual Resurrection (the Pledge or Earnest of our bodily Resurrection) we set our Affections on Things above, and not (as we used to do) on Things on the Earth³. And he that does so is indeed a Christian. But are the Generality of Men in this State? Let them ask their own Hearts the Question, and let me entreat them to improve the Testimony they shall give them to their Soul's Health. Beloved, if our Heart (tryed by God's Word) condemn us not, (then) have we Confidence towards God⁴. Otherwise, let us make haste to escape; we know not the extreme Danger of an Hour's Delay; for in such an Hour as we think not, the Son of Man cometh⁵: Not only to judge the World, but to execute Vengeance, in the mean Season, upon all Apostate Churches, as he said — I will come unto thee quickly, and

¹ Coloss. III. 1. ² Rom. VI. the whole Chapter. ³ Coloss. III. 2. ⁴ 1 John III. 21. ⁵ Matth. XXIV. 44.

will remove thy Candlestick out of his Place, except thou repent¹. How much longer Space his divine Forbearance will allow us for Repentance—or how soon we, whom he yet graciously refers to the Churches he has already destroyed for an Example, may, by his just Judgement, become ourselves a sad Example to others—I dare not take upon me to conjecture: but sure I am, the Signs of the Times, compared with the Histories of those that are past, afford a abundant Matter for the most melancholy Reflection. The following Sheets, I may hope, if read with Attention and without Prejudice, will, by the Blessing of God, awaken some out of the dangerous Slumber that is fallen upon them, which so shuts up their inward Senses against all spiritual Discernment, and habitually deadens their Affections to the Things of God. As the Arguments, here offered, were of use to myself, I may reasonably hope, they will be of some Benefit to others; and therefore no Imperfection of mine, in the Execution of my Design, could prevail with me to withhold it any longer from them. What is wanting in the

¹ Rev. II. 5.

Writer, will be fully made up by accompanying Grace to him that reads with Sincerity. And I most earnestly beseech our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God¹, to make this humble Attempt of one of the meanest of his Servants, as well as its Author, what, without his divine Blessing upon them, neither can be of themselves — effectual Instruments in his Hand for the Enlargement of his Kingdom, i. e. for the farther Display of his Glory, and the Salvation of his People.

¹ 1 Cor. I. 24.

GEORGE WATSON.

St. JUDE — 5.

I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the People out of the Land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

THE Design of this awakening Admonition, as indeed of the whole Epistle where it occurs, was to put the Christian Churches upon their Guard in a Time of manifest Danger, and thereby prevent the ruinous Consequences of a general Apostasy. The Days, foretold by our Lord and his Apostles, were now accomplished, the Mystery of Iniquity, they spake of, had began to take Effect; there were *certain Men crept in un-awares* (The Greek Word is *παρεισδυσαν*, had entered in a *by-way*, made *themselves* Teachers, without a regular divinely-instituted Appointment) whose Tenets were directly opposite to the *saving* Doctrines they had received; and therefore, whatever they might pretend, calculated only to introduce Anarchy and Confusion, to rob the Church of its Peace both here and hereafter. A Case of so desperate a Nature required a timely Interposition, and a more *powerful* one there *could* not have been than this of our Apostle. What He hath written upon this Occasion is full of divine Energy; the Sentiments have in them all the Depth

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and Majesty that is peculiar to the divine Writings, and the Expressions, with which they are clothed, are the inimitable Language of the Spirit of God. The Argument, He here uses for the Establishment of the Faithful, is of all others the most awful and affecting; it involves in it the whole stupendous Scheme of God's immutable Counsels, with respect to All whom he created to be Partakers of his Glory; of Mercy to All, who would, upon Tryal, accept of it, and of Judgement, without Mercy, to All who, in their State of Probation, would finally reject it; in a Word, the vast and comprehensive Plan, which God saw to be good, and therefore decreed *before all Time*, and the invariable Method of his Administration *in Time*, to execute and accomplish it. The Part of it we are now to consider, is that which relates to his Church, here exemplified in the miraculous Deliverance of his People out of *Egypt*, and the Judgements that afterward befel them for their incorrigible Impenitence. This Argument is much insisted upon by the Apostles; they frequently repeat it, they recommend it with Earnestness; Believers, even in those earlier and better Times, not being so attentive to the Works of God in his Dealings with *Israel*, as was necessary for their own Welfare and Security. This is implied by our Apostle in the former Member of the Text — *I will therefore* (says he) *put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this*. The Fact itself they cannot well be supposed to have forgotten; the Bible was the chief and almost *only* Study of Christians in those Days; *They* were sensible of its incomparable Excellence, and most thankfully and devoutly gave the Preference where it is due. The Apostle's Meaning therefore must be, that they had (undesignedly, I question not)

neglected

neglected to make the proper Use of the above-mentioned History, considered it indeed as an infallible Relation of great and glorious Transactions, wherein the almighty Power and loving Kindness of *Jehovah* were most marvellously displayed, and for which his Name was to be praised throughout all succeeding Generations; but they did not reflect, how nearly *They* were concerned in it; they applied it not to *themselves*; and therefore wanted, in the Circumstances they then were, the most effectual Restraint that could be laid upon them, the best Means to prevent *their* Falling *after the same Example of Unbelief*. Of this Application then the Apostle reminds them, and his Words are of the same Import with those of St. Paul to the Corinthians — *Now all these Things happened unto them for Ensamples* (Gr. *τυποι*, *Types*) *and they are written for our Admonition, upon whom the Ends of the World are come*. And then follows the Application to that Church, in as express Terms as possible — *Wherefore, let him, that thinketh he standeth, take heed, lest he fall*¹.

The Apostle's Words then, compared with these of St. Paul, contain this great and important Truth, to which it is the Duty of All, for whose Instruction it was written, to give a serious and frequent Attention; namely, That God's Proceedings with the *Israelites*, with regard to national Visitations, are a *Type* or *Figure* of his Proceedings with his Church in all Ages, to the End of the World — For the full and clear Illustration of which Point, I shall in the following Discourse,

¹ 1 Cor. X. 11, 12.

I. Enquire into the *Grounds* and *Reasons* of the Truth here asserted.

II. Prove the general Assertion by an Induction of *Particulars*; in which an Opportunity will be given me of insisting more especially upon God's Mercies to *this* Church and Nation, as vouchsafed upon *this* Day.

III. Offer some short Reflections upon the whole to your Consideration; wherein it will appear, what *Qualifications* are requisite on *our* Part for the *religious* Celebration of this Day's Solemnity. I am

I. To enquire into the *Grounds* or *Reasons* of the Truth here asserted. And these undoubtedly are, 1. That the Scheme of God's Government (as has been observed) is an *universal*, not *partial* one; and 2. the Deliverance, here referred to, the greatest *temporal* Deliverance that ever was wrought for the Church. With Regard to the First, the Scheme of the divine Administration, it must be *universal*, because it is founded and proceeds upon the Plan of *Redemption*, concerning which the Prophet declares, that *the Lord (is) good to All, and his tender Mercies (are) over all his Works*¹; And the Apostles, that *Jesus Christ is the Propitiation for our Sins, and not for ours only, but also (for the Sins) of the whole World*²; that *God is no Respector of Persons, but in every Nation, he that feareth him, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted with him*³. The Terms of Acceptance then are open

1 Pl. CXLV. 9. 2 1 John II. 2. 3 Acts X. 34, 25.

to All, and if All are not Partakers of the inestimable Benefit that was intended for All, it is not to be imputed to any Defect in the Means of Salvation, any Partiality in God, but to an obstinate and final Resistance of every Overture of Grace, or an *Apostasy* from the Faith, after we have been enlightened. The Terms of Acceptance you have just now heard — *He that feareth God, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted.* From which Words I hope to convince you, that the divine Author of our Salvation, the inexhaustible Fountain of all Mercy and Love, has never yet finally deserted, and never will desert any individual Man, or Society of Men, that have not first deserted him finally and impenitently. Now, by the *Fear of God* (when all the Passages where the Word occurs are compared together) is plainly signified — An awful Sense of his immutable *Justice*, as the sure Avenger of unexpiated Sin: It has evidently this Signification in those Words of our Saviour, *But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear, fear him, which, after he hath killed, hath Power to cast into Hell, yea, I say unto you, fear him*¹. Whoever has this Fear in himself will, with Joy and Thankfulness of Heart, *lay hold of the Hope that is set before him*; and the same Principle will preserve him, that retains it, steadfast in this Hope, till the *Love of God* be made perfect in him, and *perfect Love* casteth out *Fear*. Thus is the well-grounded *Fear of God* essentially connected with an humble Desire of his *Mercy*, and therefore *his Mercy is on them that fear him from Generation to Generation*². We are next to consider, what it is to *work Righteousness*. And here it

¹ Luke XII. 5. ² Luke I. 50.

must be remembered, that the SS. positively declare that no Son of *fallen Adam* hath any Righteousness of his own, and what Righteousness then can he work of himself? *All our Righteousnesses are as filthy Rags*¹; and it is written, *there is none righteous, no not one*². The Righteousness therefore here spoken of must be the *Redeemer's* Righteousness, who is *the End of the Law* for Righteousness to every one that believeth; i. e. who has fulfilled the all-perfect Law of God for us, as well as paid the Satisfaction for our Transgression of it, neither of which we Sinners could do for ourselves; and now by his Holy Spirit enables our Faith in him to put forth those acceptable Fruits of Righteousness in Grace, which, by Reason of Sin, we never more could have produced by Nature. But from his divine inexhaustible Store all Man's Righteousness is derived; and it is called *our* Righteousness in Holy Scripture, because it is first imputed and then given to us, not because it is our own, as of ourselves, for it is the Gift of God in Christ: Only we are free, whether we will accept of it, or trust to our own, — and upon our Choice our Salvation depends.

By Faith then it is, and by Faith only that Man can work Righteousness as it is witnessed of the Saints of old — By Faith THEY wrought Righteousness³ — whosoever will accept of Righteousness upon these Terms, may work Righteousness again, and every Son of Adam, that does so accept of it, is accepted with God — No Soul, that ever applied through Christ for it, was ever rejected. From the Terms of our Acceptance then, thus explained by the obvious Sense of the Words in holy Writ, there

¹ Isaiah LXIV. 6. ² Rom. III. 10. ³ Heb. XI. 33.

necessarily arises the following Inference, namely, that God, having determined to save fallen Man by Jesus Christ, considers the whole Race of *Adam* in this Relation. *Jehovah* (says *Isaiah*) is well-pleased for his *Righteousness Sake*¹; i. e. His Wrath is appeased, and thereby his Good-Will restored to Mankind for the Sake of Christ's Righteousness. As many therefore, as seek by *Faith* for *Justification* in *Christ*, come under the Terms and receive the Benefit: If the whole Race of *Adam* would have done so, as *he* did, the whole Race would have been accepted; a Man cannot exclude himself, but by voluntarily disqualifying himself; and according to their own future Choice fore-known of God, before the Foundation of the World*, God hath regulated his Proceedings with Men from the Beginning, and will do so to the End. To shew This in the Manner it ought to be done, it would be necessary to transcribe a complete History of the *true* Religion, and the *false*, in all its Branches, from the Fall to these our Days; but I am obliged to confine myself to a few Instances, which will, I hope, be sufficient. *Abel* then, we read, was accepted, and *Cain* rejected. But *St. Paul* informs us that *Abel* was a *Believer*²; *He offered by Faith*: And *St. Jude*, that *Cain* was an *Apostate*; for speaking of the Apostate Hereticks of his Time, whom he styles, *twice-dead*, i. e. not only *born*, as all originally are, in a State of *everlasting Death*, but now likewise cut off by their Apostasy from the *Life* which is in *Christ*, he says, *they have gone in the Way of Cain*³. Again; God hated *Esau*, and loved *Jacob*. But

1 *Isaiah* XLII. 21. 2 *Heb.* XI. 4. 3 *Jude* — 11.

* For whom he did FOREKNOW, he also did PREDESTINATE — to what? It follows — to be CONFORMED to the IMAGE of his SON &c. *Rom.* VIII. 29.

Eſau, St. Paul declares, was an Infidel and *profane Perſon*, who for one *Morſel of Meat* (to ſatisfy a little temporal Want) *ſold his Birthright*¹; and therewith not only the *Kingdom* and the *Prieſthood*, which were annexed to it, but all his Hopes, and for all he knew to the contrary, thoſe of Mankind too, in the Meſſiah: He afterwards married into an *Heathen Family*². But *Jacob* is enrolled amongſt the illuſtrious Worthies, who *obtained a good Report through Faith*³; and being Heir of the *Faith of Abraham*, he became alſo Heir of the *Promise*. Again; To *Pharaoh* the Scripture ſaith, *Even for this ſame Purpoſe I have raiſed thee up* (i. e. to the *Throne*, not to *Life*) *that I might ſhew my Power in thee* &c. and the ſame Scripture ſaith, that *his Heart was hardened*⁴. But the ſame Scripture ſaith, likewise, he hardened his own Heart⁵; in further Evidence of which, let us hear him ſpeak of himſelf — *Who is Jehovah*, ſays he, *that I ſhould obey his Voice*? His Inſolence was incorrigible, his Pride above all Conviction: A long Series of moſt aſtoniſhing and *acknowledged* Miracles could not humble him; he preſſed on to Deſtruction, with one of the greateſt *before his Eyes*; a fitter Example of divine Juſtice cannot well, I think, be conceived!

Thus it is with *Individuals* then, but it may be asked, is it ſo alſo with *Societies*? as if Societies did not conſiſt of Individuals, and the *whole* could be deprived of God's Favor, while the *Parts* enjoy it, or the *whole* enjoy it, when the *Parts* have forfeited it! Here let me repeat, That all God's Mercies to Individuals, ſince the Fall, have been beſtowed thro' the alone Merits and Interceſ-

¹ Heb. XII. 16. ² Gen. XXVI. 34. ³ Heb. XI. 21. ⁴ Exod. IX. 16—35.
Comp. with Rom. IX. 17, 18. ⁵ Exod. IX. 34.

sion of Christ: At whatever Time *they* are finally withdrawn, whether from Individuals or Communities, which they never are 'till there is no Room for Amendment, then, and not 'till then, *Individuals* are appointed to *everlasting* Destruction, and *Communities* to *temporal*; *Exclusion* from the *Presence* of *God* becomes necessary in the one Case, and *Excision* in the other. To confirm this likewise briefly by an *Example*. That the Lord loved *Israel* and hated *Canaan*, will readily be allowed. Now if it shall appear, that his Dealings with them were as impartial, as with the above-mentioned Individuals, the Conclusion will be the same here as there. The *Israelites* were the Descendants of the Father of the Faithful, they professed the true Religion in an idolatrous World, and retained it, as a Nation, when the *Canaanites* had rejected it. God, foreseeing this, promised *Abram* to put his Seed in Possession of the Land of *Canaan*, and fulfilled his Promise at the Time appointed. But here, behold the Long-suffering of God in the wide Interval between the Promise and its Completion, with the *Merciful* Reason he himself has assigned for it! *But in the Fourth Generation* (not before) *they shall come hither again, for the Iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full*¹. What tender Love is here shewn to a sinful People! What *more* could have been done for *Israel*! When their Day of Vengeance approached, he delivered *Israel* out of *Egypt*; but he suffered *Israel* to abuse his Mercy, no more than the *Amorites*. As the Apostasy of the Former was not yet general, so neither was their Destruction; but by various Visitations he cut *them* off which believed not; the Ge-

¹ Gen. XV. 16.

neration that saw his Miracles in *Egypt* fell in their Passage thro' the Wilderness, all but *Joshua* and *Caleb*, who were eminent for their *Faith*; and how he dealt with their Posterity, after their Settlement, we shall soon have Occasion to mention. I will only add here the Declarations of *Moses*, very apposite to the present Purpose, and which the Event proved to be prophetic — *And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other Gods, and serve them and worship them; I testify against you this Day, that ye shall surely perish; as the Nations, which the Lord destroyeth before your Face, so shall ye perish*¹. And in another Place he says, that if they would not observe to do all the Words of the Law, God would bring upon them all the Diseases of *Egypt*².

The Impartiality of God's Dealings with Mankind being thus established, *Israel* will appear to be the fittest Pattern that could be given to succeeding Generations, because 2dly, Their Deliverance was the greatest *temporal* Deliverance that ever was wrought for the Church. The Circumstances of Time and Place, as well as the *typical* Respect this great Event was to have to Man's *spiritual* Deliverance, required an extraordinary Exertion of divine Power — *Marvellous Things* therefore God did for them in the Land of *Egypt*, in the Field of *Zoan*³ — *He brought them forth out of Egypt, with a mighty Hand, and with an out-stretched Arm, and with great Terribleness, and with Signs, and with Wonders*⁴. Now the meritorious Cause of his Mercies being the same to *All*, if, notwithstanding such a Salvation, so mightily conducted, so gloriously accomplished, *he afterward destroyed them that*

1 Deut. VIII. 19. 2 Deut. XXVIII. 58. 3 Ps. LXXVIII. 12. 4 Deut. XXVI. 8.

believed not, the Church, in all future Ages, would here-in *best* discern the Immutability of his Proceedings. That they *have* been invariably the same with the Church in future Ages, is the general Assertion I am to prove

II. By an Induction of *Particulars*; in which an Opportunity will be given me of insisting more especially upon God's Mercies to *this* Church and Nation, vouchsafed as upon *this* Day. And 1. God did unto the *Israelites*, after their Settlement in *Canaan*, as he had done unto their Forefathers. To pass over here their divers Visitations, which were sent in Mercy to *them*, as to other Nations, to call them to Repentance, their many less remarkable Captivities under the *Judges*, and the greater ones of the Ten Tribes, after their Revolt from the House of *David*, let us consider only the famous *Captivity* of *Judah*, and their *final Dispersion*. The *Former* of these, together with the *Cause* of it, you have recorded by the inspired Historian, at the Conclusion of the Books of *Chronicles*—Moreover, says he, *all the Chief of the Priests, and the People, transgressed very much, after all the Abominations of the Heathen, and polluted the House of the Lord, which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the Lord God of their Fathers sent to them by his Messengers, rising betimes and sending, because he had Compassion on his People and on his Dwelling-Place: But they mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his Words, and misused his Prophets, until the Wrath of the Lord arose against his People, 'till there was no Remedy. Therefore he brought upon them the King of the Chaldees*¹. This is too plain to need

¹ 2 Chron. XXXVI. 14.

any Comment. But the Promises of God, not yet fulfilled, required *Judah's Restoration*; and their Affliction had so humbled them, as to make them again proper Objects of his Mercy — *By the Rivers of Babylon there they sat down, yea, they wept when they remembered Zion*¹. Thus they came once more under the Terms of Acceptance. *Moses* had expressly said, That if they would return at any Time unto the Lord their God, he would return, and gather them from all the Nations whither he had scattered them — *The Lord therefore was favourable to his Land, and brought back the Captivity of Jacob*². But they again rebelled against the Lord their God, again resisted the Holy Ghost, as their Fathers had done, who *killed the Prophets, and stoned them that were sent unto them*³. So they were again given up to a judicial Blindness, which led them at length to fill up the Measure of their Fathers by crucifying the Prince of Life, and persecuting Christianity⁴. Since which his *imprecated* Blood has laid heavy upon them; He brought the Roman *Abomination of Desolation* into his holy Place, and, by a most unparalleled Destruction, overthrew their City and Temple, dispersing the Remnant to the four Winds of Heaven. In this deplorable State have they now continued near 1700 Years, and shall continue so, 'till they acknowledge *Him* whom they crucified — *They shall see Him* no more 'till they shall say, Blessed (*is*) He that cometh in the Name of the Lord⁵; i. e. 'Till they shall acknowledge Him for their Messiah; those who did believe in Him at his Coming having acknowledged him by this Title⁶. *Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the*

1 Pf. CXXXVII. 1. 2 Pf. LXXXV. 1. 3 Matth. XXIII. 37. 4 1 Thess. II. 15, 16. 5 Matth. XXIII. 39. 6 Matth. XXI. 9.

Times of the Gentiles be fulfilled ¹; i. e. according to St. Paul's Interpretation, *Until the Fullness of the Gentiles be come in* ². Observe here, the Jews were rejected, because they rejected the Messiah; He was preached to the Gentiles, because the Gentiles were ready to receive Him: But when the Gentiles shall likewise reject him, and his People be willing to receive him, the Gentiles shall be rejected, and he shall return to his People. Well might he expostulate with them by the Mouth of his holy Prophet, *O House of Israel, are not my Ways equal, are not your Ways unequal* ³?

2ly. God has done unto the *Christian Churches*, as he did unto the Jewish. This is too copious a Subject to have a particular Consideration now; but a general Account of the *Eastern Churches*, the *seven* especially named in the *Revelations*, with the total Subversion of the Empire itself, will, 'tis presumed, be as full an Evidence as will here be expected. And the more so, as the Things, recorded of those *seven Churches*, comprehend in them every possible State, in which any Church can be; and were *therefore* recorded, that they might be a standing Lesson to all Churches, in the Ages to come, an inviolable Standard of our Lord's Dealings with all, even to the End of the World. Now the Fate of all these has been long determined; the Predictions of our Lord concerning them have had an End; and that decisive one sent to the Church in *Ephesus* been fulfilled in All — *Remember therefore*, said He to her, *from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first Works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy Candle-*

¹ Luke XXI. 24. ² Rom. XI. 25. ³ Ezek. XVIII. 29.

stick out of his Place, except thou repent¹. The Time of their Visitation then being past and allowed, we have only to enquire into the *Occasion* of it, whether *they* likewise despised the Long-Suffering of God, and perished because of *Unbelief*. It is plain from the Epistles, written by our Lord's Direction, to the Angels or Bishops of these Churches, and therein to the Churches themselves, that most of them were even then declining towards Apostasy. *He that hath an Ear, let him hear what the Spirit there saith to the Churches*. The Church in *Ephesus*, he saith, had left her first Love²; The Church in *Pergamus* had them that held the Doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a Stumbling-block before the Children of Israel, to eat Things sacrificed unto Idols, and to commit Fornication; and of the *Nicholaitans*, which Thing (saith our Lord) I hate³. The Church in *Thyatira* suffered that Woman Jezebel (some abominable Heresy so styled from K. *Ahab's* idolatrous Queen) to teach and seduce the Servants of Christ, to commit Fornication; — They who had this Doctrine are said to have known the Depths of Satan⁴. The Church in *Sardis* lived, but was spiritually dead; the Things which remained in her were ready to die; her Works were not found perfect before God; she had but a few Names (in her) which had not defiled their Garments⁵ — i. e. returned to their former Pollutions after their Regeneration. Lastly, the Church of the *Laodiceans* was lukewarm, neither cold nor hot, indifferent to the Truth, and therefore nigh unto Rejection. She said, she was rich (i. e. spiritually so) and increased with Goods, and had need of Nothing;

1 Rev. II. 5. 2 Ibid. 4. 3 Ibid. 14, 15. 4 Ibid. 20, 24. 5 III. 1, 2, 4.

and knew not that she was almost reduced to her natural State again — was wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked¹. Such was the State of five of the seven Churches as early as in *Domitian's* Reign^{*}; and a very cursory Perusal of the Ecclesiastical Historians will satisfy us, that they and the rest were not in a better Way, after the Conversion of the Roman Empire. They were divided and torn asunder by innumerable *Heresies*; and, to mention but one (under which all the rest may perhaps be finally reduced †) the impious Doctrines of

¹ Rev. III. 15, 16, 17.

^{*} A. D. 95.

† For he that denies the *Divinity* of *Christ*, denies all the *Merit* and *Benefits* of what he has done, or suffered, or can do for us — of his perfect *Obedience*, *Sufferings*, *Atonement*, *Death*, *Resurrection*, and *Intercession*. And he that denies the *Divinity* of the *Holy Spirit*, denies the *Application* of all that *Merit* and those *Benefits* to the Redeemed — the *Inspiration*, *Authority*, and *Spirituality* of his *Holy Word* — his *divine Presence* in the blessed *Sacraments* — his *Operation* upon the *Souls* of Believers — and their *Spiritual Union* under one *Head*: and so, In a Word denies the *whole* of the *Covenant of Grace*, or *Restoration* of lost Mankind by *Jesus Christ* — all the *Wisdom*, and *Righteousness*, and *Sanctification*, and *Redemption*, that God the *Father* hath given us, in and through God the *Son*, by God the *Holy Ghost*. So fruitful a Parent of Sin and Sorrow, so plainly destructive of all the *Faith*, *Hope*, and *Love*, that the Mercy of our redeeming God has shed abroad in the Heart of fallen Man, is the *abominable*, however *fashionable*, Doctrine of *Unitarianism*! The Anti-Trinitarians will, I hope, take this Matter seriously into Consideration; and as they do not *openly* as yet, that I have heard, profess themselves to be *Mahometans*, it may be a useful Hint to inform them here, that this their favorite Opinion is the very *Essence* of the *Koran* (the joint Work, as well as the Language in which it is written, i. e. the *modern Arabic*, of an apostate *Jew* or *Jews*, and an excommunicated *Nestorian Monk*) where they will read, amongst innumerable other Instances of the same Kind, the two following very remarkable ones — “Surely GOD “will not pardon the giving him an EQUAL, but will pardon any *other Sin*, except *that*, “to whom he pleaseth; and who so giveth a COMPANION unto GOD, hath devised a “great Wickedness.” Chap. IV. called the *Chapter of Women*. And again in the same Chapter — “Believe therefore in GOD and his APOSTLES, and say not, *there are THREE* “GODS (meaning three *Persons*, for the *Christians* deny three *Gods*, as well as the *Mahometans*) forbear *this*; it shall be better for you. GOD is but ONE GOD (meaning but “one *Person* in the Godhead, as it follows) far be it from him, that he should HAVE a SON.” *Salé's Translation*, Page 67, 81. To which I only beg leave to add, as a Christian, that then WE have NO eternal LIFE — for the divine Scriptures declare, *This Life is IN his SON*. 1 John. V. 11. And again more largely and emphatically, by a truly inspired Messenger, St. John the Baptist — *He that believeth on the SON hath EVERLASTING LIFE; and he that believeth NOT the SON shall NOT SEE LIFE, but the WRATH of God ABIDETH on him*. John III. 36. And let the Unitarian Devil remove it how he can, yea rather, let him apply for Pardon in Time through the *divine Merits* of the *God-Man*; and I pray the God of all Mercy to the penitent, that his Sin may be forgiven him, and his Prayer find Acceptance in the Day of his Trouble!

Arius

Arius (of which the 2d. Christian Emperor *Constantius*, and all the *Gothic* Emperors afterwards were Favorers) spread over the Empire in a few Years, were always its great Reproach, and in the End its Destruction: This was *Denying the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ*¹, denying his *Divinity*. Wherefore it pleased God at length to visit it for such repeated Provocations. At a Time, when the Emperor *Heraclius* (who was himself an Heretic) was engaged in Disputes, and by these Means inattentive to the Affairs of Government, He suffered that vile Impostor *Mahomet* to rise: Had the Emperor and his Council been employed in the *Defence* of the Faith, 'tis likely, he either would not have risen, or the Event have been different; but as it was, He and his Successors extended their Conquests with amazing Rapidity; the *Sins* of the Empire made their Victories easy: As the Measure of them was not yet full, *They* indeed were to scourge it but in Part; the *final* Overthrow of it, with the Reduction of *Constantinople*, was reserved for another *Mahomet*†, a fatal Name indeed to Christianity! whose Kingdom has been ever since the *Abomination* of *Desolation* to *Christendom*, as the *Roman* Power was to *Judea*; and hangs now, like a heavy Cloud, over the *Western* Empire, designed perhaps to break upon it too, when its Infidelity is completed — For the Throne of *Mahomet* is not supported for *no* End, and we have some Reason to fear it is supported for *This*.

Such awakening Truths as These will surely lead *us* to reflect in what Situation we ourselves stand towards God.

¹ Jude — 4.

† *Mahomet* II. Emperor of the Turks.

The Churches, whose Desolation you have heard, were once *more* flourishing than ours; they were fair *Primitive* Churches; but like the numberless other glorious Churches in *Asia* and *Africa*, they are no more; their Infidelity has long since turned them into a dark spiritual Wilderness. Because they deserted their God, the *Lord that bought them*, He that had so loved them, forsook them: Till they finally deserted *him*, and his *spiritual Things*, he forsook them not, but invited them with every Overture of his Mercy, and visited them with every Chastisement of his Love. But though *Space* was given them to *repent*, they *repented not*. Wherefore their *Glory* departed from *them*, as he had departed from *Israel* before, for the same Reason; and left *them* too a dry, parched, barren Desert, as he found them — no longer blessed with his all-cheering Influences, and thence devoid of *Faith* and all its amiable *Fruits* — but *dry, parched, and barren*, exposed to *Wrath* unexpiated *only*, un-enlightened with the *Light of Life*, and un-refreshed with the *Dew of Heaven*! And as if the *Nature* of their *Offence* was intended to be set forth in the *Kind* of their *Punishment*, their Desolation was wrought by the Sword of a *People**, whose *Religion* is professed *Unitarianism*, and whose very *Hopes* here, and supposed *Enjoyments* hereafter, are *as* openly professed *Sensuality*. Now great and manifold have been his Mercies to *this* Church and Nation; and there cannot be a fitter Time to consider what *Effect* they have had, than now we are met together to return *public* Thanks for one of the *greatest*. Such the Deliverance he vouchsafed us as upon *this* Day ought to

* The Mahometans.

be esteemed, and such it will be esteemed by All, who will give Attention to the Troubles and Miseries from which we were delivered. God was pleased for the Transgressions of our Fathers, to permit a lawless, headstrong, enthusiastical Faction to grow up in the Heart of this Kingdom, 'till it became at length too powerful to be subdued, even by Force. The *Character* of these Malecontents very nearly resembles that of the abominable Hereticks described by our Apostle, and St. *Peter*, in his 2d Epistle. They did not indeed *deny* the Lord *Jesus* with their *Lips*; they were too artful to do this; that blessed Name was hardly ever out of their Mouths; but by their *Works* they denied him, and we are commanded to judge of them by their *Fruits*. Some other Parts of the Character answer exactly in *Terms* — They were *Murmurers, Complainers, walking after their own Lusts*¹, *presumptuous, self-willed*²; while they promised Liberty, they themselves were the Servants of Corruption³; they despised Dominion, and were not afraid to speak evil of Dignities⁴. Thus qualified for any desperate Undertaking, they set forward upon their intended Reformation in Church and State; which, as indisputably appears from the Treaties of *Uxbridge* and *Newport*, was not to rectify any Abuses that might have crept into *either*, but utterly to *abolish* the then present Form of Government in *Both*, and set up in the Stead of it, a general Plan of *Independency*, wherein their Enthusiasm and Ambition might safely riot at the Expence of the Public, without the least Check or Controul from any *lawful* Authority. *Reformation*, however right and necessary in itself, under

1 Jude — 16. 2 2 Pet. II. 10. 3 ——— 19. 4 Jude — 8. 5 2 Pet. II. 10.

proper Restrictions, has in all Ages been the Plea made use of by designing Men, to recommend dangerous Innovations; and whether the lately proposed Emendations of our most excellent *Liturgy* did not proceed from the same Spirit, now more gentle and *candid*, because it is not *opposed*, may, if the Scheme should hereafter be revived, deserve your Consideration. But at the Time we are speaking of, this Spirit was more *daring*. It petitioned for Redress of Grievances at the Head of an Army, and esteemed every Thing a Grievance that stood in the Way of its favourite Project. We cannot better finish the Character of these Men, than by shewing the manifest Contrast there is, between what they *pretended* to be, and what they really *were*. As Servants of the meek and merciful Jesus, they were high-minded and implacable; as *his* Servants who *went about doing Good*; whithersoever *they* went, they spread Devastation, exercising all Kinds of Rapine and Violence; as *He* came to *save* Men's Lives, they thought it their Duty to *destroy* them; as *his* Subjects by whom *Kings reign*; they were for *extirpating Monarchy*, and blasphemously pleaded his Commis-sion so to do. But the *Event* bore undeniable Testimony to their Principles*: Notwithstanding all possible Endeavours for a Reconciliation, and more than legal Concessions on the Part of the Crown, they proceeded to the most unheard of and execrable Parricide, the public-Exe-

* The faithful *Christian* is the only faithful *Subject*. The Murder of *Kings*, however justified upon the pretended Principles of *natural* Religion, ever has been, and ever must be, held abominable upon *Christian* Principles. As this is one Instance, among many, wherein the pretended Principles of *natural* Religion are expressly *contrary* to *divine Revelation*, and therefore can never be a Foundation for it to stand upon, I could not help taking Notice of it, upon this Occasion. Christian Princes may herein see, *which* of their Subjects are the *Loyalists*, the *Christians* or the *Deists*, upon the Allegiance of *which*, they may in all Cases most securely depend. He, who is a *Traitor* to *Christ*, cannot be *faithful* to his *King*.

cution of one of the best Men that ever sat on a Throne, to the almost utter “Desolation of *two* of these Kingdoms, and the exceeding Defacing and Deforming the *third*†. Now when both Church and State were thus deeply wounded, and there appeared but little Hopes of the Recovery of either, God was pleased in a most extraordinary Manner to heal all these Wounds by his great Mercy vouchsafed to us as upon *this Day* — “By restoring to us and his own just and undoubted Rights, our then most gracious Sovereign Lord, King *Charles II.* “thereby restoring *also* unto us the public and free Profession of his true Religion and Worship, with our former Peace and Prosperity*. When we consider the remarkable Steps by which this our Deliverance was brought about, the Unanimity of this at other Times divided People to promote it, the seeming Insufficiency of the *Means*, and yet the amazing and almost incredible Expedition with which the *End* was accomplished, we cannot but discern, and ought therefore to acknowledge, that *it was not our own Arm that saved us, but his Right-Hand, and his Arm, and the Light of his Countenance, because he had a Favour unto us*¹. Such was the Deliverance for which we are here met together to praise him; and now will be the proper Time to enquire whether we have preserved a just and grateful Sense of his Mercies; for to apply to ourselves the emphatical Words of *Exra*, when he saw his People, just delivered from the Babylonish Captivity, returning to their former Abominations — *After all that is come upon us* (said He) *for*

¹ Pl. XLIV. 3.

† Lord *Clarendon's* Hist. of the Rebellion.

* Second *Collect* in the Service appointed for the Day.

our evil Deeds and for our great Trespafs, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our Iniquities deserve, and hast given us such Deliverance as This; should we again break thy Commandments, and join in Affinity with the People of these Abominations, wouldst not thou be angry with us, 'till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no Remnant or Escaping¹? And here it must be acknowledged, that the Impression, made by the divine Goodness upon the Hearts of this People, was not so lasting as might reasonably have been expected. Being now again at Ease, and in the full Enjoyment of all Kind of Prosperity, like *Jeshurun* of old, they waxed fat and kicked, they waxed fat, they grew thick, they were covered with Fatness — then they forsook God which made them, and lightly esteemed the Rock of their Salvation². Thro' a just Abhorrence of fanatical Hypocrisy, they ran head-long (as Men are too apt to do) into the opposite Extreme; as the enthusiastical Party had “turned Religion “into Rebellion,” the succeeding Politicians seem too much to have excluded it; and thereby very fatally gave Encouragement to that diabolical Scheme of natural Independency *, which affects the Title of *Deism* (tho' one inspired Writer expressly declares, that “*whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father*³”; and another, that they who are without Christ are without God, αἰεὶ⁴) which, as it falls in with the Appetites of corrupt Nature, and therefore cannot fail to recommend itself to

¹ Ez. IX. 13, 14. ² Moses's Song, Deut. XXXII. 15. ³ 1 John II. 23. ⁴ Eph. II. 12.

* *Independency*, rising out of *Pride* and *Self-Sufficiency*, was the *Devil's Crime*; and the *Principles* and *Practices*, which threw him down from Heaven, can never carry Man to Heaven: Let all therefore, that hope to see the Glory, from which he fell, beware of such *Principles* and *Practices*: 'The *Self Justifiers* of the present Age have great need of this Caution.

Men of lively Parts and unmortified Tempers, has ever since been gaining Strength, and (as has been lately observed by an honest and able Defender † of the *Faith once delivered to the Saints*) “committed strange Havock in “this our clean and well-dressed Vineyard, threatening not “only the *Fences*, but the very *Roots* and *Productions* of it.

It is Time then for the *Watchmen* to warn the People of their Danger, and use the Day of Grace for *their* Salvation and their *own* — What *I* have farther to offer upon this Subject, I will now,

III. Lastly, collect into a few short Reflections upon the whole, wherein it will appear, what *Qualifications* are requisite on *our* Part, for the *religious* Celebration of this Day’s Solemnity.

The Impartiality of God’s Proceedings with Mankind leaves *impenitent* Infidelity, wherever it is found, no Hope to escape; and the Apostle’s Argument, drawn from his Dealings with *Israel*, now verified by sad Experience, comes down to these our Times with redoubled Force — *Because of Unbelief*. (says he) *they were broken off, and thou standest by Faith; be not high-minded, but fear; for if God spared not the natural Branches, take heed lest he spare not thee. Behold therefore the Goodness and Severity of God, on them which fell, Severity, but towards thee Goodness, if thou continue in his Goodness* — Otherwise *thou also shalt be cut off*¹. He has long called *us* to

¹ Rom. XI. 20, &c.

† The truly learned and worthy Dr HODGES Provost of *Oriel* College in *Oxford*, in his *Elibu*, or an Enquiry into the principal Scope and Design of the Book of *Job*. Page 34. Quarto Edition.

Repentance by his usual Methods, and if, now his *Judgments* are amongst us, we will not *learn Righteousness*, our final Visitation must be in Vengeance: God forbid, that it should be so! and let it be our sincere Endeavour, as far as we are able, to prevent it. This every one may do in some Degree, by thinking upon his Ways, by considering whether he hath *contributed* to *obscure* the Light of the Gospel in these Kingdoms; and if he hath, to in-treat God, while it is *to Day*, for his Part of the Transgression. But if his Conscience condemn him not in this Respect, he will yet do much by *Perseverance*. Let him provoke the *Indifference* of others by his *Zeal* for the Glory of God; let him publicly confess his Master before Men, *esteeming the Reproach of Christ greater Riches than all the Treasures of the Egypt* of this World; let him hold the *Doctrines* of our most holy Faith pure and uncorrupt; and if the Primitive *Discipline* is not restored by *Authority* “which our Church acknowledges, is much “to be wished,” and, as the Lord has invested her with *full Power* to maintain it, will most undoubtedly be *required* of her — Let him revive it, as he shall have Opportunity, by exercising it upon *himself*, and in the *Family*, or other *Society*, over which God *hath* placed, or *shall* place him.

But all this, and much *more*, will be required of the *Shepherds*, in the present Exigence. Let *us*, according to the solemn Charge we have received *before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the Quick and the Dead at his appearing and his Kingdom, preach the Word, be instant in Season and out of Season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all Long-Suffering and Doctrine; watch in all Things, endure Afflictions, do the Work of Evangelists,*
make

make full Proof of our Ministry ¹. Let us take Example from the *Shepherds*, as our *Flocks* are commanded to do from the *People* of Israel: that we may not share in their *Punishment*, let us have no Share in their *Guilt*, which the Lord thus layeth to their Charge by the Mouth of his Prophet — *Son of Man, prophesie against the Shepherds of Israel, prophesie, and say unto them, thus saith the Lord God unto the Shepherds — Wo be to the Shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves; should not the Shepherds feed the Flocks? Ye eat the Fat, and ye cloath you with the Wool, ye kill them that are fed, but ye feed not the Flock — The Diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost — but with Force and with Cruelty have ye ruled them: And they were scattered because there was no Shepherd, and they became Meat to all the Beasts of the Field, when they were scattered* ². Our Duty particularly in warning the People of their Danger, and, for our Comfort, our full Discharge too, when we have done our Duty in this Respect, are clearly set forth by the same Prophet, in the preceding Chapter, under a very exact and beautiful Allusion, *that of a Watchman*, set to give a City the Alarm upon the Approach of an Enemy — *So Thou, O Son of Man (saith the Lord) I have set thee a Watchman to the House of Israel — Therefore thou shalt hear the Word at my Mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked Man, thou shalt surely die, if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked*

¹ 2 Tim. IV. 1, 2, 5. ² Ezek. XXXIV. 1, &c.

*from his Way, that wicked Man shall die in his Iniquity, but his Blood will I require at thine Hand: Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his Way, to turn from it, if he do not turn from his Way, he shall die in his Iniquity, but thou hast delivered thy Soul*¹.

Lastly, our *chief* Dependence (under God) must be upon Places of *Education*, and may the divine Spirit ingrave it in the Memories of all who are intrusted with it in *this* Place! More than *ordinary* Care should now be taken with the *rising* Generation, to warm their Hearts betimes with a deep and grateful Sense of God's Mercies, and enrich their Understandings with the all-sufficient Knowledge of his Word; that the Teachers, who go out from *us*, at least, may be both *faithful* and *able* Stewards of his manifold Grace. If the *Fountains* themselves be corrupted, the *Streams*, they send out to water the Land, will be so of Course, and the Plants thereof will *generally* thrive or perish, according as they are watered.

To conclude — Let us all then in our several Stations, and each of us according to his Ability, strive to recover what is *diminished* of the Dignity of the *Church of England*. Without such Sentiments, such Resolutions as these, I know not how we can celebrate *this Day* as we ought to do. We may *rejoice* upon it indeed, *without* these Qualifications, but we cannot, without them, keep it *holy*; we may observe it as a *Festival*, but we cannot as a *religious* one: For how shall we *praise* God for Blessings, which we neglect and despise? How *pray* for their Continuance, when we will do nothing to perpe-

¹ Ezek. XXXIII. 7, &c.

uate them? But *with* the above Qualifications, we may approach the Throne of Grace, and humbly hope for Success in our Labours: At least, if the Sins of the Many should wax so strong, as to render our best Endeavours with Regard to the *Public* Welfare, ineffectual, be intitled *ourselves* to God's Mercies *in Christ*, both here and hereafter.

Now to G O D the F A T H E R, who was pleased to accept of a Satisfaction for our Sins; to G O D the S O N, who was pleased to make that Satisfaction with his own Blood to G O D the Father; and to G O D the H O L Y G H O S T, who is pleased to sanctify all that are accepted of *God the Father in God the Son*; to the most *righteous, merciful* and loving, eternal and adoreable T R I N I T Y in U N I T Y, be Glory in the Church militant and triumphant, on Earth and in Heaven, for ever. *Amen!*

F I N I S.

